

CANADIAN ELOQUENCE



SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD, G.C.B.

CANADIAN ELOQUENCE

EDITED AND ARRANGED BY

LAWRENCE J. BURPEE



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P R E F A C E

IN selecting material for a small volume on Canadian Eloquence, it seemed preferable to give fairly complete examples of a few representative orators, rather than to attempt to cover the wider field in a fragmentary way. In the field of Canadian eloquence, Joseph Howe and Thomas D'Arcy McGee stand pre-eminent. The position of George Brown is less assured, and to the present generation his name is not associated with oratory. Yet in his day he ranked among the first speakers in Parliament; and both Howe and McGee were numbered among his contemporaries. As a public speaker, Sir John Macdonald was rather forceful than eloquent; yet there are obvious reasons why he must be included in

PREFACE

even a restricted selection of representative Canadian orators. As an expression of the higher statesmanship, many of his public speeches remain unsurpassed. No collection of Canadian Eloquence could be considered complete that did not include an example of the speeches of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, easily the foremost speaker in Canadian public life to-day, and with few peers among the statesmen of other lands.

The Editor has thought it worth while to add a few characteristic examples of Indian eloquence—interesting for their own sake, and also for purposes of comparison with the eloquence of their white brethren.

OTTAWA, 1910.

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ON CONFEDERATION

By GEORGE BROWN

Quebec, 1865

THE scene presented by this Chamber at this moment, I venture to affirm, has few parallels in history. One hundred years have passed away since these provinces became by conquest part of the British Empire. I speak in no boastful spirit—what was then the fortune of war of the brave French nation might have been ours on that well-fought field. I recall those olden times merely to mark the fact

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that here sit to-day the descendants of the victors and the vanquished in the fight of 1759, with all the differences of language, religion, civil law, and social habit nearly as distinctly marked as they were a century ago. Here we sit to-day seeking amicably to find a remedy for constitutional evils and injustice complained of—by the vanquished? No—but complained of by the conquerors! Here sit the representatives of the British population claiming justice—only justice; and here sit the representatives of the French population discussing in the French tongue whether we shall have it. One hundred years have passed away since the conquest of Quebec, but here sit the children of the victor and the vanquished, all avowing hearty attachment to the British Crown, all earnestly deliberating how we shall best extend the blessings of British institutions, how a great people may be established on this continent in close and hearty connexion with Great Britain..

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No constitution ever framed was without defect ; no act of human wisdom was ever free from imperfection ; no amount of talent and wisdom and integrity combined in preparing such a scheme could have placed it beyond the reach of criticism. And the framers of this scheme had immense special difficulties to overcome. We had the prejudices of race and language and religion to deal with ; and we had to encounter all the rivalries of trade and commerce, and all the jealousies of diversified local interests. To assert, then, that our scheme is without fault, would be folly. It was necessarily the work of concession ; not one of the thirty-three framers but had, on some points, to yield his opinions ; and, for myself, I freely admit that I struggled earnestly, for days together, to have portions of the scheme amended. But admitting all this—admitting all the difficulties that beset us—admitting frankly that defects in the measure exist—I say that, taking the scheme as a

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whole, it has my cordial, enthusiastic support, without hesitation or reservation. I believe that it will accomplish all, and more than all, that we, who have so long fought the battle of parliamentary reform, ever hoped to see accomplished. I believe that, while granting security for local interests, it will give free scope for carrying out the will of the whole people in general matters ; that it will draw closer the bonds that unite us to Great Britain ; and that it will lay the foundations deep and strong of a powerful and prosperous people. . . .

The interests to be affected by this scheme of union are very large and varied ; but the pressure of circumstances upon all the colonies is so serious at this moment, that if we cannot now banish partisanship and sectionalism and petty objections, and look at the matter on its broad intrinsic merits, what hope is there of our ever being able to do so ? An appeal to the people of Canada on this measure simply means postponement

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of the question for a year—and who can tell how changed ere then may be the circumstances surrounding us ? Sir, the man who strives for the postponement of this measure, on any ground, is doing what he can to kill it almost as effectually as if he voted against it. Let there be no mistake as to the manner in which the Government presents this measure to the House. We do not present it as free from fault, but we do present it as a measure so advantageous to the people of Canada that all the blemishes, real or imaginary, averred against it, sink into utter insignificance in presence of its merits. We present it, not in the precise shape we in Canada would desire it, but as in the best shape the five colonies to be united could agree upon it. We present it in the form in which the five governments have severally adopted it, in the form the Imperial Government has endorsed it, and in the form in which we believe all the legislatures of the province will accept it. We ask the

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House to pass it in the exact form in which we have presented it, for we know not how alterations may affect its safety in other places ; and the process of alteration once commenced in four different legislatures—who can tell where that would end ? Every member of this House is free as air to criticize it if he so wills, and amend it if he is able ; but we warn him of the danger of amendment, and throw on him all the responsibility of the consequences. We feel confident of carrying this scheme as it stands ; but we cannot tell what we can do if it be amended. Let not honourable gentlemen approach this measure as a sharp critic deals with an abstract question, striving to point out blemishes and display his ingenuity ; but let us approach it as men having but one consideration before us—the establishment of the future peace and prosperity of our country. Let us look at it in the light of a few months back, in the light of the evils and injustice to which it applies a

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remedy, in the light of the years of discord and strife we have spent in seeking for that remedy, in the light with which the people of Canada would regard this measure were it to be lost and all the evils of past years to be brought back upon us again. Let honourable gentlemen look at the question in this view—and what one of them will take the responsibility of casting his vote against the measure ?

Sir, the future destiny of these great provinces may be affected by the decision we are about to give to an extent which at this moment we may be unable to estimate ; but assuredly the welfare for many years of four millions of people hangs on our decision. Shall we then rise equal to the occasion ?— shall we approach this discussion without partisanship, and free from every personal feeling but the earnest resolution to discharge conscientiously the duty which an over-ruling Providence has placed upon us ? Sir, it may be that some among us will live

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to see the day when, as the result of this measure, a great and powerful people have grown up in these lands, when the boundless forests all around us shall have given way to smiling fields and thriving towns, and when one united government, under the British flag, shall extend from shore to shore. But who would desire to see that day if he could not recall with satisfaction the part he took in this discussion ?

ON THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS

By JOSEPH HOWE

Halifax, 1835

WILL you, my countrymen, the descendants of these men, warmed by their blood, inheriting their language, and having the principles for which they struggled confided to your care, allow them to be violated in your hands ? Will you permit the sacred fire of liberty, brought by your fathers from the venerable temples of Britain, to be quenched and trodden out on the simple altars they have raised ? Your verdict will be the most important in its consequences ever delivered before this tribunal ; and I conjure you to judge me by the principles of English law, and to leave

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an unshackled press as a legacy to your children. You remember the press in your hours of conviviality and mirth—oh! do not desert it in this its day of trial.

If for a moment I could fancy that your verdict would stain me with crime, cramp my resources by fines, and cast my body into prison, even then I would not endeavour to seek elsewhere for consolation and support. Even then I would not desert my principles, nor abandon the path that the generous impulses of youth selected, and which my riper judgment sanctions and approves. I would toil on and hope for better times—till the principles of British liberty and British law had become more generally diffused, and had forced their way into the hearts of my countrymen. In the meantime I would endeavour to guard their interests, to protect their liberties; and, while Providence lent me health and strength, the independence of the press should never be violated in my hands. Nor is there a living

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thing beneath my roof that would not aid me in this struggle : the wife who sits by my fireside ; the children who play around my hearth ; the orphan boys in my office, whom it is my pride and pleasure to instruct from day to day in the obligations they owe to their profession and their country, would never suffer the press to be wounded through my side. We would wear the coarsest raiment, we would eat the poorest food, and crawl at night into the veriest hovel in the land to rest our weary limbs, but cheerful and undaunted hearts ; and these jobbing justices should feel that one frugal and united family could withstand their persecution, defy their power, and maintain the freedom of the press. Yes, gentlemen, come what will, while I live, Nova Scotia shall have the blessing of an open and unshackled press. But you will not put me to such straits as these ; you will send me home to the bosom of my family, with my conduct sanctioned and approved ; your verdict will

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engraft upon our soil those invaluable principles that are our best security and defence.

Your verdict will, I trust, go far towards curing many of the evils which we have been compelled to review. Were you to condemn me, these men would say there is no truth in those charges, there is nothing wrong, and matters would continue in the old beaten track. If you acquit me, as I trust you will, they must form themselves into a court of inquiry for self-reformation ; they must drive out from among them those men who bring disgrace on their ranks, and mischief on the community in which they reside. But, gentlemen, I fearlessly consign myself, and, what is of more consequence, your country's press, into your hands. I do not ask for the impunity which the American press enjoys, though its greater latitude is defended by the opinions of Chancellor Kent ; but give me what a British subject has a right to claim—impartial justice, administered by

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those principles of the English law that our forefathers fixed and have bequeathed. Let not the sons of the Rebels look across the border to the sons of the Loyalists, and reproach them that their press is not free.

If I wished to be tried by your sympathies I might safely appeal to you, who have known me from my childhood, and ask if you ever found malice in my heart or sedition in my hands ? My public life is before you ; and I know you will believe me when I say that when I sit down in solitude to the labours of my profession, the only questions I ask myself are, What is right ? What is just ? What is for the public good ? I am of no party ; but I hold that when I am performing my duty to the country, I am sincerely doing that which I engaged to do when I took the press into my hands. You will hear the Attorney-General close this case on the part of the Crown, but do not allow yourselves to be won by his eloquence from the plain facts and simple

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principles I have stated. I must, however, do that gentleman the justice to acknowledge that in the conduct of this prosecution I have received nothing but courtesy at his hands. As an officer of the Crown he is bound to perform this public duty, but I well know that persecutions of the press are little to his taste. When urged at times by members of the Assembly, over which in his capacity of Speaker he presides, to resent attacks made on that body in *The Nova Scotian*, his answer had invariably been : "No ! let the press alone ; if we cannot stand against its assaults, we deserve to fall." That, I doubt not, would have been his advice to the magistrates had they deigned to consult him. But oh ! had I his powers of oratory, how I could have set this case before you !

"Were I Brutus,
And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony
That should move the very stones,"

not of Halifax to mutiny and sedition, but

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the broken stones in Bridewell to laughter and to scorn. The light of his penetrating intellect would have revealed the darkest recesses of municipal corruption ; and with the hand of a master he would have sketched the portraits of these jobbing justices, and, hanging them around the walls of Bridewell, would have damned them to imperishable renown.

LECTURE ON ELOQUENCE

By JOSEPH HOWE

Halifax, 1845

ELOQUENCE influences, more or less, every moral, economic, and political question which involves the welfare and security of those who live by labour. By one speech each man's worldly possessions may be swept away ; by one speech his country may be involved in irremediable ruin ; and one sermon, showy, declamatory, but unsound, may shatter his nerves or cloud his reason. Those whose temporal and eternal welfare may be so largely influenced by eloquence, even though they may never become eloquent themselves, ought to learn to judge of the performances of others by

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whom they may be safely guided or egregiously misled. The "lo! here" and the "lo! there" of oratorical pretence is sounding continually in the people's ears. There is as much spurious oratory passing current in the world, just now, as there is spurious coin. The ring of true metal almost every ear can detect; nor would it be much more difficult even for simple people to judge of genuine eloquence were the laws by which they are urged to decide less voluminous and contradictory. But there is no end to the making of laws, nor to the confusion which the manufacturer produces. The laws of rhetoric have increased in proportion to all the others; until, while rules for making good speeches have been steadily accumulating, the number of good ones made is proportionately on the decrease.

A practised speaker may utter what is untrue, and may not feel at all; but the impression he makes will be in proportion to

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the probability of the facts he assumes, the plausibility of his reasoning, and the apparent earnestness of his manner. So universally is this the case, that the very exceptions may be said to prove the rule and may embolden any man, however unskilful, who is strong in the truth and really in earnest, to beat down all the guards and finally overcome the most cunning rhetorician. The actor, it may be said, declaims what has no foundation in fact and cannot believe in the reality of what he utters ; but it will be found that just in proportion as the scene is true to nature, the sentiments noble and elevated, and the actor is really convulsed by the passions he delineates, will be the depth and overpowering character of the impression made upon the audience. The orator must really feel what the actor feigns, or he must become an actor and feign so adroitly what he ought to feel, as to create the belief that he is indeed in earnest. This will ever be a task of great difficulty and delicacy ; the

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safer course for plain men, dealing with the practical business of life, is :

“ To speak the truth—and feel it.”

Let it not be supposed that this rule is too simple and includes too little of labour and research. There may be cases in which a few words, embodying an important truth or a noble sentiment and spoken with dignity and force, may carry a point more surely and produce a more powerful effect than the most skilful and elaborate oration. Of this character was the address of Rochejaquelin to the Vendean :

“ If I advance, follow me ; if I fall, avenge me ; if I fly, slay me.”

That of Hegetorides, the Thasian citizen, who at the risk of his life proposed the repeal of an impolitic law :

“ Fellow-citizens, I am not ignorant of the fate that awaits me ; but I am happy to have the power to purchase by my death your preservation. I therefore counsel you to make peace with the Athenians.”

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That of Scaevola, to the King of Tuscany, when his hand was burning :

“ Learn how little those regard pain who have before their eyes immortal glory.”

Volumes of words could not have produced the effect of these short sentences, which any man of ordinary intellectual powers, without study or premeditation, might have uttered. Whence the electrical effects, precipitating masses of half-armed peasants upon the bayonets of disciplined soldiery in the one case ; and, in the other, preserving the lives of the speakers, doomed to apparently certain death ? These men spoke the truth, or showed, by their courage and elevation of soul, by the imposing energy and earnestness of their elocution, that they felt what they said—that they were in earnest.

What a noble sentence was that spoken by Nelson from the masthead of the *Victory*, on going into action : “ England expects every man will do his duty ” ; and every man did it. Why ? Because he knew that

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Nelson was in earnest ; that he felt what he said ; that he would lead the way into the thickest of the fight and lay down his life for his country. That bit of bunting, then, was truly eloquent, because he who hoisted it was a man to suit the action to the word. But, suppose it to have been hoisted by a poltroon—a man of no mark or likelihood or experience ; though none could have objected to the sentiment, very few would have been warmed by its utterance. Its influence as electrical, because every sailor in the fleet saw Nelson standing on the quarter-deck, his eye flashing with patriotic ardour, and his shattered frame ready to enforce the signal with its last pulsation.

I will not go the length of saying that Lord Nelson was a greater master of eloquence than Demosthenes, although I might almost prove it from the rhetoricians themselves, who define oratory to be “ the art of persuasion.” It was the design of the great

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Athenian to persuade his countrymen to win battles, not to lose them ; to secure the liberties of Athens against the encroachments of Philip, not to fall, after a few vain struggles, prostrate at his feet. In all the great objects for which he spoke, passing over the temporary excitement which he created, Demosthenes signally failed. It is almost profanation to say that he was not in earnest in anything, except in the desire to make good speeches, which he did ; but that if he had spoken less and died on the Macedonian spear, with one terse, vehement, national sentiment on his lips, in all probability the liberties of his country would have flourished half a century longer. Demosthenes filled his mouth with pebbles, declaimed by the sea-shore, gesticulated with drawn swords suspended above his shoulders, but threw his shield over his head and fled when his sincerity, the real depth of his feeling, came to be proven. The Athenians admired the orator, but could not depend

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on the man, and probably thought that if they were all slain in defending the liberties of their country, there would be nobody left to admire the next oration in which Demosthenes should undertake to persuade the people to do what he shrank from doing himself. Lord Nelson would have spoken a single line, but he would not have left Philip wit. a single sail in the classic seas. With that line, spoken in earnest, and backed by his own high spirit, he would have accomplished more than Demosthenes with his studied orations. If, then, Campbell is right in saying that "Eloquence, in its greatest latitude, denotes that art or talent by which a discourse is adapted to its end"; or if the object of oratory be the "production of belief"; or if rhetoric be the "art of persuasion"—in either or all of these cases Nelson may, perhaps, be considered the more eloquent of the two. At all events, if I had my choice, I would rather have one practical and sincere man like Nelson in

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Nova Scotia, with his heart on his lips and his life in his hand, than a dozen rhetoricians with mouths full of pebbles, uttering “sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

This may be a harsh judgment of Demosthenes, whose speeches are the highest models of rhetorical composition—worthy of all imitation and all praise. He doubtless was a sincere man, to the whole extent that he knew his own nature; but incapable of that heroic self-devotion which he inculcated as a duty upon others, which was the true eloquence his country required, and without which it could not be saved. To give full effect to eloquence, not only the action of the body but the action of the life must be suited to the word. Elliot, dying in prison, pleaded more eloquently for the liberties of England than Elliot declaiming in the House of Commons. Chatham, falling in the House of Lords, touched the hearts of his countrymen more keenly than his noblest passage delivered in the plenitude

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of his matchless powers. Had Demosthenes rounded his periods with an heroic death, his name would have "fulminated over Greece" with a majesty which even his oratory, almost divine as it was, could never reach.

ORATION ON SHAKSPEARE

By JOSEPH HOWE

Halifax, 1864

THIS man founded no sect, sat on no throne, conducted no government, led no army, upheaved no ancient dominion. How is it, then, that three hundred years after he has been dead and buried, in a province of which he never heard—which was a wilderness for two hundred years after he was born—how happens it, that in a city not founded for a century and a half after he was in his grave, we are assembled to hold high festival on this man's natal day? How does it occur that the highest in military rank and civic station comes here at the head of all of that is distinguished by culture and

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refinement, to do honour to the memory of Shakspear ; that the Parliament adjourns, that the courts are closed, that business is suspended, that the place where "merchants most do congregate" is deserted, and that all ranks and classes, by a common impulse, have gathered here to do honour to this man's memory ? As your procession moved through the streets, the scene was most imposing, and now I can scarcely see your heads for banners consecrated to every branch of our nationality and to every form of Christian benevolence. Faces as fresh as Rosalind's and eyes as bright as Juliet's smile approbation or rain influence on this scene, until the heart dances at the sight of an intellectual community doing homage to genius by methods the most graceful and with a unanimity that is marvellous. . . .

Shakspeare left behind him, when he died, thirty-seven dramas and a few poems. Upon these his reputation rests ; but it is curious

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to reflect how tardy the world, now so unanimous in its verdict, was in recognizing its benefactor. That Queen Elizabeth and the brilliant men by whom she was always surrounded applauded his plays in the old Globe Theatre which he managed, and enjoyed his poems in their studious hours, we have authentic record. That the sturdy middle-class of English society, for whom his plays were written, wept and laughed three centuries ago exactly as we weep and laugh, no man can doubt. That the critics in the pit wondered then, as now, at the fertility of his invention, while the gods in the gallery roared at his inexhaustible humour, are facts which we may assume to lie upon the surface of all safe speculation. But how did it happen that for more than a century his works appear to have passed from the minds of men, and that his reputation, like the aloe, took a hundred years to bloom? Who can safely answer this question? For more than two centuries the

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European races trod the soil of Nova Scotia without perceiving the gold that lay beneath their feet; the Temple Church was buried in rubbish for more than a century, till its beautiful proportions and elegant ornamentation were redeemed and restored by a tender and loving process akin to that by which the dramatic works of Shakspeare have been redeemed and illustrated.

The poet appears to have taken but little pains to ingratiate himself with posterity. Though he published his poems, which went through several editions during his lifetime, but few of his dramatic works were printed while he lived. The whole were collected and published by his fellow-comedians seven years after his death.

But in 1623, the year in which they were published, the world was beginning to be busy about other things than stage plays and dead poets. That great historical drama, in many acts, of which England was

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to become the theatre, was in course of preparation. James the First, with his pedantic learning, haughty favourites, and high prerogative notions, was passing away amidst a storm of parliamentary eloquence more intensely exciting even than dramatic literature. Eliot and Pym, Hampden and Vane, were unfolding the grievances of England, as Mark Antony bared the wounds of Cæsar in the forum. The first act closed with the death of James two years after the publication of Shakspeare's plays, and Charles the First ascended the throne in 1625.

By-and-by money was wanted for foolish Continental wars, and the Commons of England were determined that the redress of grievances and supplies should go together. The Star Chamber was busy with arrests and thumbscrews, and Laud was busy dictating to all earnest-minded Englishmen how they should worship God and what they should believe. The "times are out

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of joint," and sweet Will Shakspeare must wait awhile for recognition :

"Till the hurly-burly's done,
And the battle's lost and won."

Then ship-money is demanded and resisted, and Charles comes down to seize the members in the Commons House of Parliament. Then Prynne's ears are cut off in the pillory, and the leaders of the people are fined and imprisoned. And now the action of the great drama becomes intensely exciting—the counties begin to arm, and Hampden lives in the saddle. The King's standard is set up, and a rough-looking soldierly man, with broad shoulders, a huge head, and some pimples on his face begins to attract attention, as Washington did long after when a man of action was required. By 1642, nineteen years after Shakspeare's plays were printed, the Cavaliers and Roundheads are fairly at it. Then come Edgehill, Marston Moor, and Naseby. Hampden and Falkland

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are dead, Laud and Wentworth executed. People are too busy making history to care much about representations of it, and Shakspeare must sleep on.

The slovenly-looking soldier with the broad chest has come to the front, and, at the head of a marvellous regiment of cavalry, has trampled down on every battle-field everything opposed to him. People may be excused for not thinking of Shakspeare, with such a phenomenon as Cromwell in living flesh and blood, treading the stage before their eyes.

Then came the capture of the King and his execution—Irish and Scotch wars, Drogheda and Dunbar—more materials for history rapidly accumulating. Then there are pestilent Dutchmen—Von Tromp, De Witt, and De Ruyter—in the Channel with 120 ships, prepared to land and burn all the theatres and other property of the nation; and Shakspeare must be quiet while Monk and Deane and other gallant Englishmen

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sweep this nuisance out of the narrow seas.
And swept it was by the besom of destruction,
and no brooms have been hoisted in
the Channel since.

And by-and-by there is peace at home
and abroad, and the Lord Protector, with
John Milton for his secretary, and John
Howe for his chaplain, is standing on the
place where the throne of England stood,
known of all men as a redoubtable soldier and
a most wary politician. But Oliver, though
he loved a grim joke at times, and could
snatch off his son Richard's wig at a wedding
or smear Dick Martin's face with ink after
signing the death-warrant, was no favourer
of stage plays, and it behoved Will Shakspeare
to be quiet until he had made his
exit. . . .

The reaction of cheerfulness came with
the Restoration—the theatres were re-
opened and the maypoles went up again.
And now, one might fairly assume that
Shakspeare's hour had come. But it had not.

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Charles, who had been twelve years an exile, if he had not lost his English cheerfulness, had become a foreigner in all his tastes. The men who had shared his expatriation had learned to speak and write and think in French and other foreign languages ; and foreign literature—dramatic literature especially—which day by day beguiled the tedious hours of banishment, had become a necessary of life. Foreign tastes came back with the court, and were of course cultivated by the higher classes.

How was it with the great body of the people ? The Wars of the Roses had ceased to interest them. They had a civil war of their own, brought home to their very doors with stern reality. What were the fictitious sorrows of dethroned monarchs compared with the real tragedy behind Whitehall ? The ravings of Margaret and the lamentations of Constance were forgotten in presence of Henrietta Maria, with her children in her hand, taking leave of the royal husband she

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was to behold no more. The men who had seen a charge of the Ironsides were not easily stirred by a flourish of trumpets on the stage ; and those who had seen Hampden, Rupert, Essex, Ireton, and Desborough in the saddle required no poet to show them what the men and horses were like that broke the French at Agincourt and Poictiers. And so sweet Will Shakspeare slept on through the Restoration as he had done through the Protectorate, until the court of England was composed of men and women who had been bred at home—who could relish English humour and English sentiment ; and a sturdy middle-class had grown up who b^h I wondered at Milton and laughed at “ Hudibras ” till they were weary of both, and had begun to long for something less exaggerated and more germane to the realities of everyday human life. The Puritan warriors and Cavaliers had passed off the scene ; and, to the new generation who knew them not, both civil wars were

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alike historical; while the feudal chivalry of York and Lancaster, as drawn by Shakespeare, seemed, of the two battalia, the more picturesque.

Another king had been driven out, the people had seized the purse-strings, responsible government was established, "the liberty of unlicensed printing" had been secured, and glorious John Dryden, Prior, and Ben Jonson had taught the people of England the flexibility and music of our mother-tongue; and Bunyan, Locke, Defoe, and Addison had shown how all-sufficient it was for the expression of arguments the most subtle and for the highest flights of the most luxuriant imagination.

Then the discovery was made that a dead Englishman, who had been buried a hundred years, had left to his countrymen a literary treasure of inestimable value. What was Cæsar's legacy of seventy-five drachmas to each of the citizens of Rome?—here was a treasure inexhaustible, and capable of sub-

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division among the British races to the end
of time. What were Caesar's

" walks,
His private arbours, and new planted orchards,
On this side Tiber ? "

Here were the gardens of the Hesperides,
richer in enchantment than the bowers
of Calypso and Armida—orchards where
“ apples of gold in pictures of silver ” were
hung within the reach of all—arbours that
a Mussulman warrior would die to inherit
—with Imogen and Thasia, Cressida and
Titania, Portia and Jessica, Helena, Cordelia,
Olivia and Beatrice, flitting through the
foliage with fascinations ever varying and
smiles that could never fade.

With a spirit of deep reverence and un-
selfish love did the great poets and critics
of modern England address themselves to
the task of exhuming this treasure and mak-
ing known to their countrymen its extent
and value. Foremost in this good work were
Rowe and Theobald, Pope, Warburton and

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Johnson ; and after them have come critics and commentators by the score, till every obsolete phrase has been explained, every old word translated into current English, every blemish detected, every beauty brought to the surface. In this labour of love, Goethe and Schlegel and Voltaire and the finer minds of continental Europe have laboured with diligence and often with keen discrimination, until the subject has been exhausted, and now no wise man looks for a new fact or for a plausible suggestion.

A brilliant series of great actors and actresses have devoted their lives to the study of Shakspeare's plays, and have won fortune and high distinction by their illustration. Garrick, Mrs. Siddons, the Keans and Kembles, Macready, and many other brilliant artists have, for a hundred and fifty years, presented to succeeding generations the masterpieces of this great dramatist. Yet "custom cannot stifle his infinite variety,"

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and still "excess of appetite grows by what it feeds on."

During these hundred and fifty years the genius of Shakspeare has kept possession of the public mind, appealed to by rivals in every walk of literature, and it may be safely said that no book, except the Bible, has taken a hold of it so universal and so firm. Tried by every test, read in the best of ancient and modern literature, Shakspeare has not only held his own, but has steadily risen in general estimation.

Now, what is the secret of this great success — of this universal homage? Who shall give the answer? The ocean with its majestic waves, fathomless depths, and ever receding outlines, who can measure or define? The starry heavens are incomprehensible to the astronomer who can weigh the planets, as to the peasant who, in simple love and reverence, sees them shine above his head. The incendiary who destroyed the Temple

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of Diana could not comprehend the secret of that universal admiration which made his act a sacrilege and a crime. We stand beside Niagara, or beneath the dome of St. Peter's or St. Paul's, and are overpowered by a sense of sublimity and beauty, for which we thank God, but which it is extremely difficult to analyse. We hang over a beautiful statue, or gaze at a fine picture, but are lost and bewildered when we come to describe why it touches our feelings or excites our involuntary admiration.

If the phenomena of nature, the sublimities of architecture, and the miracles of high art thus impress and confound us, we can readily understand how it is that we stand awe-struck and bewildered in presence of a writer who is at once a creator and an artist ; at whose command "cloud-capp'd towers and gorgeous palaces" spring out of the earth ; who sets the sublime "artillery of heaven" to music ; who presents to our admiring gaze forms that would defy the

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chisel of Canova or the pencil of Sir Peter Lely ; who sketches scenery with the warmth of Claude and the dripping softness of Gainsborough ; who reasons like a philosopher, speaks like a statesman, and jests like a king's fool ; who infuses life into the dead bones of history, clothes warriors and kings and prelates with living flesh and blood, and makes them unfold their policy as though he had been familiar with their counsels, and act and speak as though a photographer and reporter had been present all the time. We accept this man as a gift from the all-bountiful Creator, but we cannot comprehend him, or fathom the secret springs of his ascendancy and power.

How like the blast of a trumpet has the magnificent speech which Shakspeare puts into the mouth of our fifth Harry on the eve of the battle of Agincourt rung through the hearts of Englishmen in all parts of the world ! At Torres Vedras, at Waterloo, at

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Inkerman, at Lucknow and Delhi, wherever our countrymen have been far from home and hard bestead, Shakspeare's glorious thoughts have been uppermost in their minds.

The time may come, in these British provinces, when we may be called upon to test the purity of our lineage and "the metal of our pastures"; and when it comes, let us hope that Shakspeare's invocation may not be lost upon us. Our volunteers and militiamen show well upon parade, in their "gayness" and their "gilt," but when the "working-day" comes, and they

"are all besmirc'h'd
With rainy marching in the painful field,"

let us hope that they will emulate the valour of the mother-isles without a Westmoreland wish to have "more men from England."

Shakspeare's national dramas are a valuable addition to the history of our country. An admiral of some celebrity declared that he read nothing else. I have read nearly

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all the works of our popular historians, but how few of them paint the scenes they describe with the vividness of Shakespeare ! and where is there one that presents the men of bygone periods with the same dramatic power ? . . .

The same may be said of the ten national dramas, including seven reigns, and spreading over a period of three hundred years. The portions of history which Shakspeare has illustrated are invariably those into which we have the clearest insight, and to which we return again and again with interest deepening as we read.

Of Queen Elizabeth we have only the christening benediction and a fine foreshadowing at the close of "Henry VIII.," but what would we not give for a drama by Shakspeare, in which the two rival queens, with Cecil and Walsingham, Raleigh and Essex, Bothwell and Rizzio, were sketched with the distinctness of the Yorkists and Lancastrians of an earlier period ? And

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coming down to the later civil wars, how hard we find it, without Shakespeare's guidance and portraiture, to gather from all the historians and biographers (and they are numerous enough) the same vivid, realistic notions of Cromwell and Monk, of Rupert, Ireton, Waller, Fleetwood, and other Cavaliers and Parliamentarians, that he has given us of Hotspur, Falconbridge, Warwick, or John of Gaunt!

But we are not only indebted to Shakespeare for clearer views of English history, but for some marvellous delineations of stirring events and portraitures of remarkable men in times more remote. Plutarch and Livy are highly dramatic and picturesque, and yet we rise from the perusal of their charming volumes with a dreamy and indistinct impression of the scenes they describe and of the characters they portray. There is a haze of remote antiquity which we cannot completely penetrate; and the stately language they employ, while it fascinates,

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often elevates us above the range of practical business, and the point of view from which a clear insight can be had into the affairs of common life.

Shakspeare, in "Julius Caesar" and "Coriolanus," takes us to Rome, and gives us the very spirit of the scenes that he animates with real bustling human beings. We hear the mob roaring in the streets, the orators speaking in the forum, we almost touch their robes and feel their warm breath upon our faces. The topics are different, but the men are perfectly present to our senses, as an English mob would be shouting in Charing Cross, or Lord Derby or John Bright speaking in Parliament. His Greeks are just as lifelike. When an Englishman reads Homer, though he is charmed by the rapidity and variety of movement and by the exquisite skill of the versification, the celestial machinery is a sad drawback. We should take but little interest in a charge of cavalry at Balaclava, or in a fight between

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King and Heenan, if Juno were to interpose a cloud or catch up a pugilist, when the Russians or the American were getting the worst of it. In "Troilus and Cressida" there are no gods and goddesses, but Greeks and Trojans, so lifelike and natural, that we hear them rail and jest, mourn and make love, as though our own blood-relations or familiar friends were conducting the dialogues ; and when the combats begin, whether single or general, it is stern, English hand-to-hand fighting, by the heady currents of which we are swept along, till we almost bet the odds, and clap our hands with excitement, as the blows are struck or the charges are delivered and sustained. By the aid of Shakspeare I can see the burly form of Ajax in action or repose as distinctly as I can see Shaw the Life-Guardsman. Hector's plume is as much a reality to me as General Doyle's, and Astyanax, introduced by the Bard of Avon, is a genuine English baby.

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But wherever he wafts us it is the same. We revel in the warm air of Cyprus, and drink the Greek wine with Cassio ; we float down the Nile with Cleopatra, or stand upon the blasted heath with Macbeth ; and our difficulty is not so much to realize the scene as to get back to full possession of our identity, and to be sure that we are not a part of it.

ON THE RECIPROCITY TREATY

By JOSEPH HOWE

Detroit, 1865

WE are here to determine how best we can draw together in the bonds of peace, friendship, and commercial prosperity the great branches of the British family. In the presence of this great theme all petty interests should stand rebuked: we are not dealing with the concerns of a city, a province, or a state, but with the future of our race in all time to come. . . . Why should not these three great branches of the family flourish, under different systems of government, it may be, but forming one grand whole, proud of a common origin and of their advanced civilization? We are taught

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to reverence the mystery of the Trinity, and our salvation depends on our belief. The clover lifts its trefoil leaves to the evening dew, yet they draw their nourishment from a single stem. Thus distinct, and yet united, let us live and flourish. Why should we not ? For nearly two thousand years we were one family. Our fathers fought side by side at Hastings, and heard the curfew toll. They fought in the same ranks for the sepulchre of our Saviour—in the earlier and later civil wars. We can wear our white and red roses without a blush, and glory in the principles those conflicts established. Our common ancestors won the Great Charter and the Bill of Rights—established free Parliaments, the Habeas Corpus, and trial by jury. Our jurisprudence comes down from Coke and Mansfield to Marshall and Story, rich in knowledge and experience which no man can divide. From Chaucer to Shakspeare our literature is a common inheritance ; Tennyson and Longfellow write

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in one language which is enriched by the genius developed on either side of the Atlantic. In the great navigators, from Cotterel to Hudson, and in all their "moving accidents by flood and field," we have a common interest. On this side of the sea we have been largely reinforced by the Germans and French, but there is strength in both elements. The Germans gave to us the sovereigns who established our freedom, and they give to you industry, intelligence, and thrift; and the French, who have distinguished themselves in arts and arms for centuries, now strengthen the provinces which the fortune of war decided they could not control. But it may be said we have been divided by two wars. What then? The noble St. Lawrence is split in two places —by Goat Island and by Anticosti—but it comes to us from the same springs in the same mountain-sides; its water sweeps together past the pictured rocks of Lake Superior, and encircle in their loving embrace

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the shores of Huron and Michigan. They are divided at Niagara Falls as we were at the revolutionary war, but they come together again on the peaceful bosom of Ontario. Again they are divided on their passage to the sea; but who thinks of divisions when they lift the keels of commerce, or when, drawn up to heaven, they form the rainbow or the cloud? It is true that in eighty-five years we have had two wars—but what then? Since the last we have had fifty years of peace, and there have been more people killed in a single campaign in the late civil war than there were in the two national wars between this country and Great Britain. You hope to draw together the two conflicting elements and make them one people. And in that task I wish you God-speed! And in the same way I feel that we ought to rule out everything disagreeable in the recollection of our old wars, and unite together as one people for all time to come.

ON THE DEATH OF MACDONALD

By SIR WILFRED LAURIER

Ottawa, 1891

I FULLY appreciate the intensity of the grief which fills the souls of those who were the friends and followers of Sir John Macdonald, at the loss of the great leader whose whole life has been so closely identified with their party—a party upon which he has thrown such brilliancy and lustre. We on this side of the House, who were his opponents, who did not believe in his policy nor in his methods of government—we take our full share of their grief, for the loss which they deplore to-day is far and away beyond and above the ordinary compass of party range. It is in every respect a

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great national loss, for there is no more who was, in many respects, Canada's most illustrious son and in every sense Canada's foremost citizen and statesman. At the period of life to which Sir John Macdonald had arrived, death, whenever it came, cannot be said to come unheralded. Some few months ago, during the recent federal election, the whole country was made aware that on the Alberta side the physical strength of the late Premier had not been equal to his age, and that his intense labor for the time being had prostrated his singularly frail frame, everybody, with the exception of himself, of his buoyant spirits. It was painful to witness perhaps the first of death as it touched him with his Whiffen, a few days ago, in the heat of the session in this Parliament, news reached the House that of a sudden his heart had given way. The alarming, the surging waves of angry discussion were at once hushed, and every one, friend and foe,

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realized that this time for a certainty the angel of death had appeared and had crossed the threshold of his home. Thus we were not taken by surprise, and, although we were prepared for the sad event, yet it is almost impossible to convince the unwilling mind that it is true that Sir John Macdonald is no more, that the chair which we now see empty shall remain for ever vacant, that the face so familiar in this Parliament for the last forty years shall be seen no more, and that the voice so well known shall be heard no more, whether in solemn debate or in pleasant and mirthful tones. In fact, the place of Sir John Macdonald in this country was so large and so absorbing that it is almost impossible to conceive that the political life of this country, the fate of this country, can continue without him. His loss overwhelms us. For my part, I say with all truth his loss overwhelms me, and it also overwhelms this Parliament, as if indeed one of the institutions of the land had given way. Sir John

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Macdonald now belongs to the ages, and it can be said with certainty that the career which has just been closed is one of the most remarkable careers of this century.

It would be premature at this time to attempt to fix or anticipate what will be the final judgment of history upon him ; but there were in his career and in his life features so prominent and so conspicuous that already they shine with a glow which time cannot alter, which even now appear before the eye such as they will appear to the end in history. I think it can be asserted that, for the supreme art of governing men, Sir John Macdonald was gifted as few men in any land or in any age were gifted—gifted with the most high of all qualities, qualities which would have made him famous wherever exercised, and which would have shone all the more conspicuously the larger the theatre. The fact that he could congregate together elements the most heterogeneous and blend them into one compact party, and

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to the end of his life keep them steadily under his hand, is perhaps altogether unprecedented. The fact that during all those years he retained unimpaired not only the confidence, but the devotion, the ardent devotion and affection of his party, is evidence that, besides those higher qualities of statesmanship to which we were the daily witnesses, he was also endowed with those inner, subtle, undefinable graces of soul which win and keep the hearts of men. As to his statesmanship, it is written in the history of Canada. It may be said without any exaggeration whatever, that the life of Sir John Macdonald, from the date he entered Parliament, is the history of Canada, for he was connected and associated with all the events, all the facts which brought Canada from the position it then occupied—the position of two small provinces, having nothing in common but their common allegiance, united by a bond of paper, and united by nothing else—to the present state

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of development which Canada has reached. Although my political views compel me to say that, in my judgment, his actions were not always the best that could have been taken in the interest of Canada, although my conscience compels me to say that of late he has imputed to his opponents motives which I must say in my heart he has misconceived, yet I am only too glad here to sink these differences, and to remember only the great services he has performed for our country—to remember that his actions always displayed great originality of view, unbounded fertility of resource a high level of intellectual conception, and, above all, a far-reaching vision beyond the event of the day, and still higher, permeating the whole, a broad patriotism—a devotion to Canada's welfare, Canada's advancement, and Canada's glory.

The life of a statesman is always an arduous one and very often it is an ungrateful one. More often than otherwise

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his actions do not mature until he is in his grave. Not so, however, in the case of Sir John Macdonald. His career has been a singularly fortunate one. His reverses were few and of short duration. He was fond of power, and, in my judgment, if I may say so, that may be the turning-point of the judgment of history. He was fond of power, and he never made any secret of it. Many times we have heard him avow it on the floor of this Parliament, and his ambition in this respect was gratified as, perhaps, no other man's ambition ever was. In my judgment, even the career of William Pitt can hardly compare with that of Sir John Macdonald in this respect; for although William Pitt, moving in a higher sphere, had to deal with problems greater than our problems, yet I doubt if in the intricate management of a party William Pitt had to contend with difficulties equal to those Sir John Macdonald had to contend with. In his death, too, he seems to have been singu-

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larly happy. Twenty years ago I was told, by one who at that time was a close personal and political friend of Sir John Macdonald, that in the intimacy of his domestic circle he was fond of repeating that his end would be as the end of Lord Chatham—that he would be carried away from the floor of Parliament to die. How true that vision into the future was we now know, for we saw him to the last with enfeebled health and declining strength struggling on the floor of Parliament until the hand of fate pinned him to his bed to die. And thus to die with his armour on was probably his ambition.

Sir, death is the law, the supreme law. Although we see it every day in every form, although session after session we have seen it in this Parliament striking right and left without any discrimination as to age or station, yet the ever-recurring spectacle does not in any way remove the bitterness of the sting. Death always carries with it

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an incredible sense of pain; but the one thing sad in death is that which is involved in the word separation—separation from all we love in life. This is what makes death so poignant when it strikes a man of intellect in middle age. But when death is the natural termination of a full life, in which he who disappears has given the full measure of his capacity, has performed everything required from him, and more, the sadness of death is not for him who goes, but for those who loved him and remain. In this sense I am sure the Canadian people will extend unbounded sympathy to the friends of Sir John Macdonald—to his sorrowing children, and, above all, to the brave and noble woman his companion in life and his chief helpmate.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, one after another we see those who have been instrumental in bringing Canada to its present stage of development removed from amongst us. To-day we deplore the loss of him who,

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we all unite in saying, was the foremost Canadian of his time, and who filled the largest place in Canadian history. Only last week was buried in the city of Montreal another son of Canada, one who at one time had been a tower of strength to the Liberal party, one who will ever be remembered as one of the noblest, purest, and greatest characters that Canada has ever produced, Sir Antoine Aimé Dorion. Sir Antoine Aimé Dorion had not been in favour of Confederation. Not that he was opposed to the principle; but he believed that the union of these provinces, at that day, was premature. When, however, Confederation had become a fact, he gave the best of his mind and heart to make it a success. It may indeed happen, Sir, that when the Canadian people see the ranks thus gradually reduced and thinned of those upon whom they have been in the habit of relying for guidance, that a feeling of apprehension will creep into the heart lest, perhaps, the

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institutions of Canada may be imperilled. Before the grave of him who, above all, was the father of Confederation, let not grief be barren grief ; but let grief be coupled with the resolution, the determination, that the work in which Liberals and Conservatives, in which Brown and Macdonald, united, shall not perish, but that though united Canada may be deprived of the services of her greatest men, still Canada shall and will live.

DEFENCE OF WASHINGTON TREATY

By SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD

Ottawa, 1872

IT has been said that England has sacrificed the interests of Canada. If England has sacrificed the interests of Canada, what sacrifice has she not made in the cause of peace between those two great nations, rendering herself liable, leaving out all indirect claims, to pay millions out of her own treasury ? Has she not made all this sacrifice, which only Englishmen and English statesmen can know, for the sake of peace ? For whose sake has she made it ? Has she not made it principally for the sake of Canada ? Let Canada be severed from England, let

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England not be responsible to us and for us, and what could the United States do to England? Let England withdraw herself into her shell, and what can the United States do? England has got the supremacy of the sea—she is impregnable in every point but one, and that point is Canada; and if England does call upon us to make a financial sacrifice, does find it for the good of the Empire that we, England's first colony, should sacrifice something, I say that we should be unworthy of our proud position if we were not prepared to do so. I hope to live to see the day, and if I do not, that my son may be spared to see Canada the right arm of England, to see Canada a powerful auxiliary to the Empire, not, as now, a cause of anxiety and a source of danger. And I think that if we are worthy to hold that position as the right arm of England, we should not object to a sacrifice of this kind when so great an object is attained, and that object a lasting one. . . .

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I believe that this treaty is an epoch in the history of civilization ; that it will set an example to the wide world that must be followed ; and with the growth of the great Anglo-Saxon family, and with the development of that mighty nation to the south of us, I believe that the principle of arbitration will be advocated as the sole principle of settlement of differences between the English-speaking peoples, and that it will have a moral influence in the world. And although it may be opposed to the antecedents of other nations, that great moral principle which has now been established among the Anglo-Saxon family will spread itself over all the civilized world. It is not too much to say that it is a great advance in the history of mankind, and I should be sorry if it were recorded that it was stopped for a moment by a selfish consideration of the interests of Canada.

ON UNRESTRICTED RECIPROCITY

By SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD

1891

I HAVE pointed out to you a few of the material objections to this scheme of Unrestricted Reciprocity, but they are not the only objections, nor in my opinion the most vital. For a century and a half this country has grown and flourished under the protecting ægis of the British Crown. The gallant race who first bore to our shores the blessings of civilization passed by an easy transition from French to English rule, and now form one of the most law-abiding portions of the community. These pioneers were speedily recruited by the advent of a loyal band of British subjects, who gave up

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everything that men most prize, and were content to begin life anew in the wilderness rather than forgo allegiance to their Sovereign. To the descendants of these men, and of the multitude of Englishmen, Irishmen, and Scotchmen who emigrated to Canada, that they might build up new homes without ceasing to be British subjects—to you Canadians I appeal, and I ask you what have you to gain by surrendering that which your fathers held most dear? Under the broad folds of the Union Jack we enjoy the most ample liberty to govern ourselves as we please, and at the same time we participate in the advantages now flowing from association with the mighty Empire the world has ever seen. Not only are we free to manage our domestic concerns, but, practically, we possess the privilege of making our own treaties with foreign countries, and, in our relations with the outside world, we enjoy the prestige inspired by a consciousness of the fact that behind us towers the majesty

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of England. The question you will shortly be called upon to determine resolves itself into this : shall we endanger our possession of the great heritage bequeathed to us by our fathers, and submit ourselves to direct taxation for the privilege of having our tariff fixed at Washington, with a prospect of ultimately becoming a portion of the American Union ? I commend these issues to your determination, and to the judgment of the whole people of Canada, with an unclouded confidence that you will proclaim to the world your resolve to show yourselves not unworthy of the proud distinction that you enjoy, of being numbered among the most dutiful and loyal subjects of our beloved Queen.

As for myself, my course is clear. A British subject I was born—a British subject I will die. With my utmost effort, with my latest breath, will I oppose the “veiled treason” which attempts by sordid means and mercenary proffers to lure our people

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from their allegiance. During my long public service of nearly half a century I have been true to my country and its best interests, and I appeal with equal confidence to the men who have trusted me in the past, and to the young hope of the country, with whom rests its destinies for the future, to give me their united and strenuous aid in this, my last effort, for the unity of the Empire and the preservation of our commercial and political freedom.

ON BRITISH-AMERICAN UNION

By THOMAS D'ARCY McGEE

Quebec, 1860

I ENTREAT the House to believe that I have spoken without respect of persons, and with a single desire for the increase, prosperity, freedom and honour of this incipient Northern Nation. I call it a Northern Nation—for such it must become, if all of us do our duty to the last. Men do not talk on this continent of changes wrought by centuries, but of the events of years. Men do not vegetate in this age, as they did formerly, in one spot, occupying one portion. Thought outruns the steam car, and hope outlies the telegraph. We live more in ten years in this era than the patriarch did in a

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thousand. The patriarch might outlive the palm tree which was planted to commemorate his birth, and yet not see so many wonders as we have witnessed since the constitution we are now discussing was formed. What marvels have not been wrought in Europe and America from 1840 to 1860! And who can say the world, or our own portion of it more particularly, is incapable of maintaining to the end of the century the ratio of the past progress? I for one cannot presume to say so. I look to the future of my adopted country with hope, though not without anxiety. I see in the not remote distance one great nationality, bound, like the shield of Achilles, by the blue rim of Ocean. I see it quartered into many communities, each disposing of its internal affairs, but all bound together by free institutions, free intercourse, and free commerce. I see within the round of that shield the peaks of the Western Mountains and the crests of the Eastern waves,

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the winding Assiniboine, the five-fold lakes, the St. Lawrence, the Ottawa, the Saguenay, the St. John, and the basin of Minas. By all these flowing waters, in all the valleys they fertilize, in all the cities they visit in their courses, I see a generation of industrious, contented, moral men, free in name and in fact—men capable of maintaining, in peace and in war, a constitution worthy of such a country.

THE POLICY OF CONCILIATION

By THOMAS D'ARCY McGEE

Montreal, 1861

THE career I have had in Canada led me chiefly into those parts of the country inhabited by men who speak the English language, and using the opportunities which I have had between the time when I ceased to be a newspaper publisher to that of my admission as a member of the Lower Canada bar, I trust I have learned something which may be profitable to me in the position to which you elevated me on trust and in advance. The result of my observation, thus made, is, that there is nothing to be more dreaded in this country than feuds arising from exaggerated feelings of religion

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and nationality. On the other hand, the one thing needed for making Canada the happiest of homes, is to rub down all sharp angles, and to remove those asperities which divide our people on questions of origin and religious profession. The man who says this cannot be done consistently with any set of principles founded on the charity of the Gospel or on the right use of human reason is a blockhead, as every bigot is—while under the influence of his bigotry he sees no further than his nose. For a man who has grown to years of discretion—though some never do come to those years—who has not become wedded to one idea, who, like Coleridge, is as ready to regulate his conduct as to set his watch when the parish clock declares it wrong, who is ready to be taught by high as well as by low, and to receive any stamp of truth—I may say that such a man will come to this conclusion : that there are in all origins men good, bad, and indifferent; yet for my own part, my experience is that in all

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classes the good predominate. I believe that there have come out of Ireland, noble as she is, those whom she would not recognize as her children ; and so with other countries celebrated for the noble characteristics of their population as a whole. In Canada, with men of all origins and all kinds of culture, if we do not bear and forbear, if we do not get rid of old quarrels, but, on the contrary, make fresh ones—whereas we ought to have lost sight of the old when we lost sight of the capes and headlands of the old country—if we will carefully convey across the Atlantic half-extinguished embers of strife in order that we may by them light up the flames in our inflammable forests, if each neighbour will try not only to nurse up old animosities, but to invent new grounds of hostility to his neighbour : then, gentlemen, we shall return to what Hobbes considered the state of Nature—I mean a state of war. In society we must sacrifice something, as we do when we go through a

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crowd, and not only must we yield to old age, to the fairer and better sex, and to that youth which, in its weakness, is entitled to some of the respect which we accord to age, but we must sometimes make way for men like ourselves, though we could prove by the most faultless syllogism our right to push them from the path.

In his great speech respecting the Unitarians, Edmund Burke declared that he did not govern himself by abstractions or universals, and he maintained in that same argument (I think) that what is not possible is not desirable, that the possible best is the absolute best—the best for the generation, the best for the man, since the shortness of life makes it impossible for him to achieve all that he could wish. I believe the possible best for us is peace and good-will. With this belief I did my part to heal up those feuds which prevailed in Montreal and westward before and at the election of 1857; I felt that some one must condone

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the past, and I determined, so far as I could be supposed to represent your principles, to lead the way ; I tried to allay irritated feeling, and I hope not altogether without success. We have a country which, being the land of our choice, should also have our first consideration. I know, and you know, that I can never cease to regard with an affection which amounts almost to idolatry the land where I spent my best, my first years, where I obtained the partner of my life, and where my first-born saw the light. I cannot but regard that land even with increased love because she has not been prosperous. Yet I hold we have no right to intrude our Irish patriotism on this soil ; for our first duty is to the land where we live and have fixed our homes, and where, while we live, we must find the true sphere of our duties. While always ready, therefore, to say the right word and to do the right act for the land of my forefathers, I am bound above all to the land where I reside ; and

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especially am I bound to put down, so far as one humble layman can, the insatiate spread of a strife which can only tend to prolong our period of provincialism and make the country an undesirable home for those who would otherwise willingly cast in their lot among us. We have acres enough, powers mechanical and powers natural, and sources of credit enough to make out of this province a great nation ; and, though I wish to commit no one to my opinion, I trust that it will not only be so in itself, but will one day form part of a greater British North American State, existing under the sanction of, and in perpetual alliance with, the Empire under which it had its rise and growth.

AMERICAN RELATIONS AND CANADIAN DUTIES

By THOMAS D'ARCY McGEE

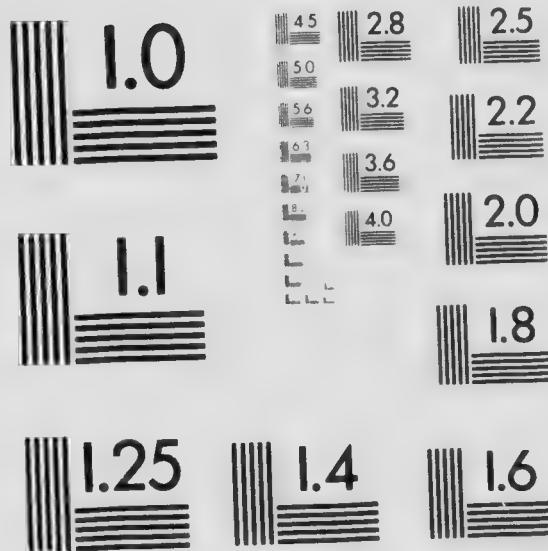
Quebec, 1862

IT is upon this subject of the public spirit which can alone make Canada safe and secure, rich and renowned, which can alone attract population and augment capital, that I desire to say the few words with which I must endeavour to fulfil your expectations. I feel that it is a serious subject for a popular festival; but these are serious times, and they bring upon their wings most serious reflections. That shot fired at Fort Sumter, on April 12, 1861, had a message for the North as well as for the South, and here in Quebec, if anywhere, by



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the light which history lends us, we should find those who can rightly read that eventful message. Here, from this rock for which the immortals have contended, here, from this rock over which Richelieu's wisdom and Chatham's genius, and the memory of heroic men, the glory of three great nations has hung its halo, we should look forth upon a continent convulsed, and ask of a ruler, "Watchman, what of the night?" That shot fired at Fort Sumter was the signal gun of a new epoch for North America, which told the people of Canada, more plainly than human speech can ever express it, to sleep no more, except on their arms—unless in their sleep they desire to be overtaken and subjugated. For one, I can safely say that if I know myself I have not a particle of prejudice against the United States; on the contrary, I am bound to declare that many things in the constitution and the people I sincerely esteem and admire. What I contend for with myself, and what I would

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impress upon others, is, that the lesson of the last few months furnished by America to the world should not be thrown away upon the inhabitants of Canada. I do not believe that it is our destiny to be engulfed into a Republican union, renovated and inflamed with the wine of victory, of which she now drinks so freely ; it seems to me we have theatre enough under our feet to act another and a worthier part. We can hardly join the Americans on our own terms, and we never ought to join them on theirs. A Canadian nationality—not French-Canadian, nor British-Canadian, nor Irish-Canadian : patriotism rejects the prefix—is, in my opinion, what we should look forward to, that is what we ought to labour for, that is what we ought to be prepared to defend to the death. Heirs of one-seventh of the continent, inheritors of a long ancestral story—and no part of it dearer to us than the glorious tale of this last century—warned not by cold chronicles only, but by living scenes

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passing before our eyes, of the dangers of an unmixed democracy, we are here to vindicate our capacity, by the test of a new political creation. What we most immediately want to carry on that work is men—more men—and still more men. The ladies, I dare say, will not object to that doctrine. We may not want more lawyers and doctors—but we want more men, in town and country. We want the signs of youth and growth in our young and growing country. One of our maxims should be—"Early marriages, and death to old bachelors." I have long entertained a project of a special tax upon that most undesirable class of the population, and our friend the Finance Minister may perhaps have something of the kind among the agreeable surprises of his next budget.

Seriously, what I chiefly wanted to say in coming here is this, that if we would make Canada safe and secure, rich and renowned, we must all liberalize—locally, sectionally, religiously, nationally. There is room

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enough in this country for one great free people ; but there is not room enough, under the same flag and the same laws, for two or three angry, suspicious, obstructive "nationalities." Dear, most justly dear to every land beneath the sun are the children born in her bosom and nursed upon her breast ; but when the man of another country, wherever born, speaking whatever speech, holding whatever creed, seeks out a country to serve and honour and cleave to, in weal or in woe—when he heaves up the anchor of his heart from its old moorings, and lays at the feet of the mistress of his choice, his new country, all the hopes of his ripe manhood, he establishes by such devotion a claim to consideration not second even to that of the children of the soil. He is their brother delivered by a new birth from the dark-wombed Atlantic ship that ushers him into existence in the new world ; he stands by his own election among the children of the household ; and narrow and

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unwise is that species of public spirit which, in the perverted name of patriotism, would refuse him all he asks—"a fair field and no favour." I am not about to talk politics, though these are grand politics; I reserve all else for what is usually call'd "another place"—and, I may add, for another time. But I am so thoroughly convinced and assured that we are gliding along the currents of a new epoch, that if I break silence at all, in the presence of my fellow-subjects, I cannot choose but speak of the immense issues which devolve upon us, at this moment, in this country. Though we are alike opposed to all invidious national distinctions on this soil, we are not opposed, I hope, to giving full credit to all the elements which at the present day compose our population. In this respect it is a source of gratification to learn that among your invited guests to-night there are twelve or thirteen members of the House to which I have the honour to belong—gentlemen from both

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sides of the House—who drew their native breath in our own dearly beloved ancestral island. It takes three-quarters of the world in these days to hold an Irish family, and it is pleasant to know that some of the elder sons of the family are considered by their discriminating fellow-citizens worthy to be entrusted with the liberties and fortunes of their adopted countries. We have here men of Irish birth who have led, and who still lead, the Parliament of Canada, and who are determined to lead it in a spirit of genuine liberality.

We Irishmen, Protestant and Catholic, born and bred in a land of religious controversy, should never forget that we now live and act in a land of the fullest religious and civil liberty. All we have to do is, each for himself, to keep down dissensions which can only weaken, impoverish, and keep back the country ; each for himself do all he can to increase its wealth, its strength, and its reputation ; each for himself—you and you,

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gentlemen, and all of us—to welcome every talent, to hail every invention, to cherish every gem of art, to foster every gleam of authorship, to honour every acquirement and every natural gift, to lift ourselves to the level of our destinies, to rise above all low limitations and narrow circumscriptions, to cultivate that true catholicity of spirit which embraces all creeds, all classes, and all races, in order to make of our boundless province, so rich in known and unknown resources, a great new Northern nation.

CHARACTER OF CHAMPLAIN, THE FIRST CAPTAIN-GENERAL OF CANADA

By THOMAS D'ARCY McGEE

Fort Popham, 1862

WHAT we esteem most of all other features in the life of our Founder, is that chief virtue of all eminent men—his indomitable fortitude; and next to that we revere the amazing versatility and resources of the man. Originally a naval officer, he had voyaged to the West Indies and to Mexico, and had written a memoir, lately discovered at Dieppe, and edited both in France and England, advocating among other things the artificial connection of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. From

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the quarter-deck we trace him to the counting-rooms of the merchants of Rouen and Saint-Malo, who first entrusted him, in 1603, with the command of a commercial enterprise of which Canada was the field. From the service of the merchants of Rouen, Dieppe, and Saint-Malo we trace him to the service of his Sovereign—Henri IV. For several successive years we find his flag glancing at all points along this rock-bound coast on which we are now assembled, from Port Royal to Massachusetts Bay. Whenever we do not find it here, we may be certain it has advanced into the interior, that it is unfurled at Quebec, at Montreal, or towards the sources of the Hudson and the Mohawk. We will find that this versatile sailor has become in time a founder of cities, a negotiator of treaties with barbarous tribes, an author, a discoverer. As a discoverer, he was the first European to ascend the Richelieu, which he named after the patron of his latter years—the all-powerful Cardinal. He

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was the first to traverse that beautiful lake, now altogether your own, which makes his name so familiar to Americans ; he was the first to ascend our great central river, the Ottawa, as far north as Lake Nippising ; and he was the first to discover what he very justly calls "the fresh-water sea" of Lake Huron. His place as an American discoverer is, therefore, amongst the first ; while his claims as a colonizer rest on the firm foundations of Montreal and Quebec, and his project—extraordinary for the age—of uniting the Atlantic with the Pacific by an artificial channel of communication. As a legislator, we have not yet recovered if we ever shall recover, the ordinances he is known to have promulgated ; but as an author we have his narrative of transactions in New France, his voyage to Mexico, his treatise on navigation, and some other papers. As a statesman we have the Franco-Indian alliance, which he founded, and which lasted a hundred and fifty years on this continent. And which

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exercised so powerful an influence not only on American but on European affairs. To him also it was mainly owing that Canada, Acadia, and Cape Bretor were reclaimed by and restored to France under the treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, in 1632.

As to the moral qualities, our Founder was brave almost to rashness. He would cast himself with a single European follower in the midst of savage enemies, and more than once his life was endangered by the excess of his confidence and his courage. He was eminently social in his habits—as his order of *Le Bon Temps* shows—in which every man of his associates was for one day host to all his comrades, and commanded in turn in those agreeable encounters of which we have just had a slight skirmish here. He was sanguine, as became an adventurer, and self-denying as became a hero. He served under De Monts, who for a time succeeded to his honours and office, as cheerfully as he had ever acted for himself, and in the end he

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made a friend of his rival. He encountered, as Columbus and many others had done, mutiny and impatience in his own followers, but he triumphed over the bad passions of men completely as he triumphed over the ocean and the wilderness.

He touched the extremes of human experience among diverse characters and nations. At one time he sketched plans of civilized aggrandizement for Henri IV. and Richelieu ; at another he planned schemes of wild warfare with Huron chiefs and Algonquin braves. He united, in a most rare degree, the faculties of action and reflection, and like all highly reflective minds, his thoughts, long cherished in secret, ran often into the mould of maxims, and some of them would form the fittest possible inscriptions to be engraven upon his monument.

When the merchants of Quebec grumbled at the cost of fortifying that place, he said : "It is best not to obey the passions of men ;

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they are but for a season : it is our duty to regard the future." With all his love of good-fellowship and society, he was, what seems to some inconsistent with it, sincerely and enthusiastically religious ; among his maxims are these two : that "the salvation of one soul is of more value than the conquest of an empire," and that "Kings ought not to think of extending their authority over idolatrous nations, except for the purpose of subjecting them to Jesus Christ."

Such are, in brief, the attributes of the man you have chosen to honour ; and I leave it for this company to say whether, in all that constitutes true greatness, the first Governor and Captain-General of Canada need fear comparison with any of the illustrious brotherhood who projected and founded our North American States. Count over all their honoured names ; enumerate their chief actions ; let each community assign to its own his meed of eloquent and

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reverent remembrance ; but among them, from North to South, there will be no secondary place assigned to the Sieur de Champlain.

THE DEATH OF LINCOLN

By THOMAS D'ARCY McGEE

Montreal, 1865

IT is not on the principle of speaking no ill of the dead that I venture to subscribe personally to the declaration that this atrocious assassination is not only a crime against our common humanity and our common Christian civilization, but that the loss of Mr. Lincoln at this moment is a loss to that humanity and that civilization. The spirit of clemency, moderation, and of conciliation displayed by the late President were virtues uncommon, almost unexampled, in time of civil war ; they are virtues whose sweet savour must have ascended before him to the judgment-seat to which he was so suddenly sum-

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moned; they were virtues which entitled him to the beatitude pronounced upon a Judæan mountain, and echoed all over heaven—"blessed are the peacemakers." Let me venture to express the hope, that as the American people revere the memory, so they will follow, in this respect, the sublime example of their lamented President. To do otherwise—to lose their equilibrium, to forgo their magnanimous purposes, even under the terrible shock they have suffered—would be to allow the assassin's policy to triumph over the policy of President Lincoln. Thank God, there is one compensating consequence attendant on even such a crime! Never yet did the assassin's knife reach the core of a cause or the heart of a principle. No wreath of Harmodius hides, in history, the barren results of these bloody short-cuts to forbidden ends. And as for the wretched criminals in this case—they cannot hope to escape their due punishment. They have conspired in what they have done against

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the whole civilized world, and the whole civilized world is concerned in bringing to justice the guilty ; but in the name of that humanity and civilization which mourned the fate of the murdered President, by the memory and example he left to his people, let the avenger's arms descend only on the guilty, and after due evidence of their guiltiness. Should this be the course taken by the United States, I have no hesitation in saying that their greatest victory is yet before them ; that a victory greater than any won on the field of battle ; that the more shining page in their annals is yet to be written ; and that the noblest example of self-government the world has yet seen is about to be set by those who will so endeavour to honour the memory of Abraham Lincoln by walking in the way, and under the guidance of the spirit, of Abraham Lincoln.

FROM HIS LAST SPEECH

By THOMAS D'ARCY McGEE

Ottawa, April 6, 1868

I HOPE that in this House mere temporary or local popularity will never be made the test by which to measure the worth or efficiency of a public servant. He who builds upon popularity builds upon a shifting sand. He who rests simply on popularity, and who will risk the right in hunting after popularity, will soon find the object he pursues slip away from him. It is, in my humble opinion, the leader of a forlorn hope who is ready to meet and stem the tide of temporary unpopularity; who is prepared, if needs be, to sacrifice himself in defence of the principles which he has adopted as

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those of truth ; who shows us that he is ready not only to triumph with his principles, but even to suffer for his principles ; who has proved himself, above all others, worthy of peculiar honour. . . . The Union is not to be consolidated by any temporary conciliating concessions to evanescent popular prejudice—not by any momentary humouring, in this direction or that, or some particular local or sectional phase of public opinion—but by our constant, earnest, and unremitting care of the commercial welfare and progress of the provinces. And besides this attention and practical consideration, we need, above everything else, the healing influence of time. I have great reliance on the mellowing effects of time. It is not only the lime, and the sand, and the hair, and the mortar, but the time which has been taken to temper it. And if time be so necessary an element in so rudimentary a process as the mixing of mortar, of how much greater importance must it be in the work of consolidating the

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Confederation of these provinces. Time will heal all existing irritations ; Time will mellow and refine all points of contrast that seem so harsh to-day ; Time will come to the aid of the pervading principles of impartial justice, which happily permeates the whole land. By-and-by Time will show us the Constitution of this Dominion as much cherished in the hearts of the people of all its provinces, not excepting Nova Scotia, as is the British Constitution itself. . . . I will not believe that such anticipations are ill-founded, for I can find their precedent even in the history of Nova Scotia herself. When Cape Breton was annexed to Nova Scotia—annexed not by any Act of Parliament, but simply by an order of the King in Council—the people were so strongly opposed to the Union that they almost threatened rebellion. Well, this took place as lately as 1820, and already Time has brought with it its certain healing operations, and there is no question raised now of the

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advantages which the Union has conferred. There is no such question, because there has been no consequent injustice. The incorporated people have found that there is no desire to rob them of their liberties, and no disposition to treat them with unfairness. They see, what Time shows them, that the Union was effected for their advantage, as well as that of their neighbours, and they are satisfied, because they find it working for both. And I have every confidence that we will similarly wear out Nova Scotian hostility by the unfailing exercise and exhibition of a high-minded spirit of fair play. It has been said that the interests of Canada are diametrically opposed to the interests of Nova Scotia ; but I ask which of the parties to the partnership has most interest in its successful conduct, or has most to fear from the failure which the misfortunes or the losses of any of its members must occasion ? Would it not be we who have embarked the largest share of the

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capital of Confederation ? Our friends need have no fear but that that Confederation will ever be administered with serene and even justice. To its whole history, from its earliest inception to its final triumphant consummation, no stigma can be attached, no stain attributed. Its single aim from the beginning has been to consolidate the extent of British North America with the utmost regard to the independent powers and privileges of each province, and I, who have been, and who am still, its warm and earnest advocate, speak here not as the representative of any race or of any province, but as thoroughly and emphatically a Canadian, ready and bound to recognize the claims, if any, of my Canadian fellow-subjects, from the farthest east to the farthest west, equally as those of my nearest neighbour or of the friend who proposed me on the hustings.

INDIAN ELOQUENCE

TECUMSEH'S SPEECH BEFORE THE BATTLE OF MORAVIANTOWN, 1813

FATHER (he thundered), listen to your children ! You see them now all before you. The war before this, our British father gave the hatchet to his red children when our old chiefs were alive. They are now all dead. In that war, our father was thrown on his back by the Americans, and our father took them by the hand without our knowledge, and we are afraid our father will do so again at this time.

Summer before last, when I came forward with my red brethren, and was ready to take up the hatchet in favour of our British father, we were told not to be in a hurry—that

TECUMSEH

he had not yet determined to fight the Americans.

Listen ! When war was declared, our father stood up and gave us the tomahawk, and told us that he was now ready to strike the Americans—that he wanted our assistance ; and that he would certainly get us our lands back, which the Americans had taken from us.

Listen ! You told us at that time to bring forward our families to this place. We did so, and you promised to take care of them and that they should want for nothing, while the men would go and fight the enemy that we were not to trouble ourselves with enemy's garrisons ; that we knew nothing about them, and that our father would attend to that part of the business. You also told your red children that you would take good care of their garrison here, which made our hearts glad.

Listen ! When we last went to the Rapids, it is true we gave you little

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assistance. It is hard to fight people who live like ground-hogs.

Father—listen! Our fleet has gone out ; we know they have fought ; we have heard the great guns, but know nothing of what has happened to our father with one arm [Barclay]. Our ships have gone one way, and we are much astonished to see our father tying up everything and preparing to run away the other, without letting his red children know what his intentions are. You always told us to remain here and take care of our lands ; it made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish. Our great father, the king, is the head, and you represent him. You always told us you would never draw your foot off British ground ; but now, father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so without seeing the enemy. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat animal, that carries its tail upon its back, but when affrighted, it drops it between its legs and runs off.

TECUMSEH

Listen, father ! The Americans have not yet defeated us by land ; neither are we sure that they have done so by water ; we therefore wish to remain here, and fight our enemy, should they make their appearance. If they defeat us, we will then retreat with our father.

At the battle of the Wabash, last war, the Americans certainly defeated us ; and when we retreated to our father's fort at that place, the gates were shut against us. We were afraid that it would now be the case ; but instead of that we now see our British father preparing to march out of his garrison.

Father ! You have got the arms and ammunition which our great father sent for his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go in welcome, for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and if it is His will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.

LA GRANDE GUEULE

Speech to La Barre, at La Famine,
1684

ONONTIO, I honour you ; and all the warriors who are with me honour you. Your interpreter has ended his speech, and now I begin mine. Listen to my words.

Onontio, when you left Quebec, you must have thought that the heat of the sun had burned the forests that make our country inaccessible to the French, or that the lake had overflowed them so that we could not escape from our villages. You must have thought so, Onontio ; and curiosity to see such a fire or such a flood must have brought you to this place. Now your eyes are opened ; for I and my warriors have come to

LA GRANDE GUEULE

tell you that the Senecas, Cayugas, Onondagas, Oneidas, and Mohawks are all alive. I thank you in their name for bringing back the calumet of peace which they gave to your predecessors ; and I give you joy that you have not dug up the hatchet which has been so often red with the blood of your countrymen.

Listen, Onontio ! I am not asleep. My eyes are open ; and by the sun that gives me light I see a great captain at the head of a band of soldiers, who talks like a man in a dream. He says that he has come to smoke the pipe of peace with the Onondagas ; but I see that he came to knock them in the head, if so many of his Frenchmen were not too weak to fight. I see Onontio raving in a camp of sick men, whose lives the Great Spirit has saved by smiting them with disease. Our women had snatched war-clubs, and our children and old men seized bows and arrows to attack your camp, if our warriors had not restrained them, when

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your messenger, Akouessan, appeared in our village. . . .

Listen, Onontio! My voice is the voice of the Five Tribes of the Iroquois. When they buried the hatchet at Cataraqui in presence of your predecessor, they planted the tree of peace in the middle of the fort, that it might be a post of traders and not of soldiers. Take care that all the soldiers you have brought with you, shut up in so small a fort, do not choke this tree of peace. I assure you in the name of the Five Tribes that our warriors will dance the dance of the calumet under its branches ; and that they will sit quiet on their mats and never dig up the hatchet, till their brothers, Onontio and Corlaer, separately or together, make ready to attack the country that the Great Spirit has given to our ancestors.

LOGAN'S SPEECH TO LORD DUNMORE, IN 1774

I APPEAL to any white man to say if he ever entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat ; if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not. During the course of the last long and bloody war Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my countrymen pointed, as they passed, and said, " Logan is the friend of the white men." I had even thought to have lived with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the

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veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it; I have killed many; I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country, I rejoice at the beams of peace; but do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one.

ON THE WHITE MAN AND HIS WAYS

THE MANDAN CHIEF

WHITE people do not know how to live ; they leave their houses in small parties ; they risk their lives on the great waters, among strange nations who will take them for enemies. What is the use of beaver ? Do they make gunpowder of them ? Do they preserve them from sickness ? Do they serve them beyond the grave ?

We are no slaves ! Our fathers were not slaves ! In my young days there were no white men, and we knew no wants. We were successful in war ; our arrows were pointed with flint, our lances with stone, and their wounds were mortal. Our villages

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rejoiced when the men returned from war,
for of the scalps of our enemies they brought
many. The white people came; they
brought with them some good, but they
brought also the small-pox, and they brought
evil liquors. The Indians since diminish,
and they are no longer happy.

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